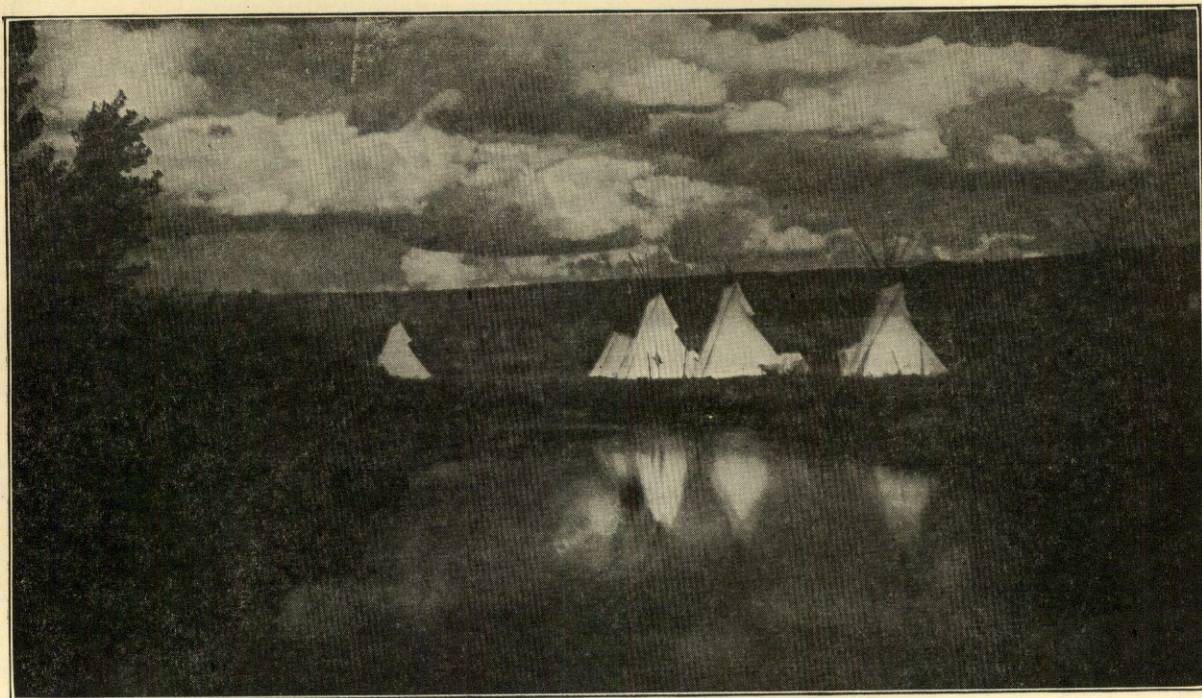




AN INDIAN VILLAGE.*

INDIAN SONGS

THE San Geronimo feast is over. It was an interesting ceremony, beyond our understanding and my descriptive ability.

Leaving the railroad at Ute Park we staged to Taos, through a beautiful cañon, and across the Merino Valley. Going through the cañon, four Indian hunters spied us, broke camp, and followed us for miles. They knew we were not plainsmen, nor the freighter who crosses so often, as we had trunks and strange apparatus piled high on the wagons. They rode up, and we talked to them, and finally took a picture. They kept close to our party, and again one of them rode up and wanted us to take another picture of them at the top of the mountain we were nearing. We knew this was a cunning trick to be with us at dinner and feeding time. We, of course, consented. Reaching the place mentioned we passed them something to eat and smoke, after which we bade them goodbye and told them to meet us San Geronimo's Day at the Pueblo. In the evening we passed out of Taos Canoñ into a beautiful valley, irrigated by the native Mexicans. After passing Penitent Hill, we passed through long rows of adobe houses and the studios of some of our famous Indian painters into the plaza. Here stands the home of Kit Carson, who lived prior to his death when agent of the Indians here at the Pueblo. Here stands the home of Padro Martinez, the first priest, who established the first newspaper west of the Mississippi river, "El Crepusculo" (The Dawn), published just four weeks and printed in capital letters. Strolling through Taos you

think you are at a moving picture show. Winding down the narrow streets, you come across burros heavily loaded with wood and other packs, Spanish speaking people on all sides, Indians lounging about, tourists, farmers, and ranchers.

THE LEGEND OF SAN GERONIMO

The following is the legend of San Geronimo, as told by the Red Willow Indians at the Taos Pueblo. The birthday is celebrated on the 30th of September every year. When the earth was new a great chief ruled over his people. He came from the clouds and taught his subjects to live and work. On one evening at sunset he left them, and said that none could follow him over the mountain, but that he would return some day and bring them bountiful harvests. The legend goes on to say, that one evening in the long ago they heard a voice calling them at sunset, calling each by name. They all went to find it, and there beheld a man of large stature and handsome. He demanded to know why the valleys were barren, and why the people did not till the soil. They answered they knew nothing about tilling the soil and raising food stuffs. He answered them that he was their god, and that he had come to teach them to till the soil and be prosperous. After ruling his people many prosperous moons he departed one evening at sunset. When the Indians became Catholics their priests gave them a patrón saint in the form of San Geronimo, their departed God. His wooden image is kept in the adobe chapel at the pueblo.

* The pictures in this volume, used by permission, are from photographs by the noted Indian artist Richard Throssel, Billings, Montana, owner of the copyright.

THE SUNDOWN CEREMONY AND DANCE

This ceremony is in honor of the departure of their god of long ago. It takes place the eve before San Geronimo's Day, and begins with a vesper service in the chapel. Communicants take their candles with them into the church, light them at the altar, kneel, and pray, after which they station themselves on the highest points of the pueblo to await the coming of the dance ceremony. Just at sundown the bell is sounded, then the waiting dancers, clad in white blankets and decorated with aspen boughs, make their way to the church. There the drums sound a tattoo and the mournful song is started. Leaving the church they dance, a slow movement, singing all the time, through the streets of the pueblo.

SAN GERONIMO'S DAY

Bright red shawls, waved from the topmost pinacles of the pueblos, invite the blessings of the rising sun, also signaling for the return of their god of the harvest. This is kept up until the sun is in full view. Then, at the sound of the bell, a procession starts from the church escorting the image of San Geronimo, which is carried by a beautiful maiden to the chapel of aspen and cottonwood. Here are the races. Runners from the two clans are started from the stand which holds the image, in a relay race, over a 400 yard course, to run ten miles. At the start two medicine men stand behind the runners who are chosen to run next. With magic feathers they brush the runner, spitting "Good Medicine" on the runner all the time, encouraging him to run and save the race for his clan, who, if winners, will have a voice in electing the coming governor of the pueblo. Each runner is nude, painted over in colors. Small feathers are stuck over his person to give him lightness and to act as "Good Medicine." These he believes will make him run faster and give him good luck for his side.

The time is recorded in the Estufas with other history. Later in the afternoon the Chiffoneti made their appearance, their pranks amusing the bystanders all the time. This is the origin of the Chiffoneti. Once the tribe had a long famine, and the chiefs appointed certain members of the tribe to create fun to take their minds off their misery. They are dressed with just a head gear of corn shucks, their bodies painted over with black and white. Finally, the Chiffoneti find a long pole, and on the tip they see good things to eat—a sheep, bread, cakes. This means to them that the famine is broken. One fellow climbs the pole and lowers the good things to eat. They believe that San Geronimo placed them there for his people.

A WEDDING CEREMONY OF THE RED WILLOW INDIANS

The bride and her people are seated on one side of the room, when the bridegroom and his party enter with the

Indian priest of the tribe, an exponent of their religion of the Sun God. The priest comes to the center and asks questions of the bride and all her people. Everyone has to give consent, and they answer in a soft low voice, saying the syllables: "Um'n." He then instructs the bridegroom how to live and how to provide for his bride. In this he goes into the remotest detail—how a man should treat his wife, how to raise the corn, how to hunt. They both come to the center of the room, kneel, and the priest exchanges their rosaries. After this a wedding breakfast is served. Then, in about three weeks, the Catholic priest marries them again.

DANCES

The sundown dance, danced on the eve of San Geronimo's Day, is of slow *tempo*, without drums, a ceremonial dance, mourning the departure of their god. It is a three pulse to the measure rhythm. The dancers move in two lines and carry the boughs of the aspen, moving through the streets of the two principal pueblos.

DANCE FOR THE VICTORS

This dance takes place after the races on San Geronimo's day. It is a joyful one, as they believe the saint is pleased with the race and the winners. It is danced to the same melody as the sundown dance song, only much quicker. The dance formation is the same.

THE BUFFALO DANCE

A dance celebrated at the Christmas time, or the Twelfth night, which portrays the actions and movements of the buffalo. The drums produce a low, rumbling sound imitating the sound of a large herd when grazing. The dancers sway to and fro, imitating the movements of the buffalo when grazing, from one side to the other. The chiefs are dressed in the skins of the buffalo, and are stationed so

that they will be guardians against the bad spirits or people who kill off their herds.

THE EAGLE DANCE

Two Indians emerge from an estufa, dressed in eagle feathers, their movements representing movements of an eagle hopping around on the ground. At times they raise their arms to represent the wings, high, then low, the music of the song rising and falling with their movements. This dance is a severe muscular test. After the dance they return to their nest, the estufa.

THE DEER DANCE

This is their Thanksgiving. The dancers represent all the animals in the mountains. The leaders represent the deer, as it is the best meat and the skins are used for many purposes. They wear the deer horns and heads and carry long sticks



JOHN TURKEY LEGS.

in their hands to represent the forelegs of the deer. In the line all animals are represented, the dancers portraying the movements of the animal they represent. No sound of song or drum is heard at this time. As the dancers approach, the girls, with their rattles and magic wands, advance, then retreat, until they have ensnared the animals. Then the slaughter takes place and the song and sound of the drum is heard.

WAR DANCES

The war dances are similar to those of other tribes and many are borrowed from the neighboring ones. All are devoid of much melody. The rhythm is a 2-4 *allegro*, used to excite. The Owl or Squaw dance songs and the songs and dances for ordinary pleasure are danced any time. They are not ceremonial in any respect. Some are very pretty and tuneful when harmonized. The Pony Dance is a dance for exhibition purposes only, the dancers imitating the ponies in characteristic poses and movements. The Turtle Dance is a slow grotesque movement, and represents the tribe hunting for water. The Matchina Dance is to represent the coming of Cortez. The dancers are massed in close formation, going through intricate figures.

MUSIC

The music of the Red Willow Indians is similar in nature to all tribes, with the exception of the ceremonies, and many songs are used for all of them. For their Owl and Squaw dances they have many songs. Songs of other tribes are heard here. Probably the love songs are the more tuneful. They are sung at night by members of different clans from the bridge which spans the Taos river and separates the two large pueblos. You hear a flute occasionally. The love songs are composed and owned by individuals when wooing. Words of love, which the girls say to their lovers, are introduced. For the rest the ordinary vowel-syllable is used.

TAKING SONG RECORDS AT PUEBLO

Upon entering a room, or abode, in the pueblo, the first thing you note is the neatness of the arrangement—the whitewashed walls, the appropriate burlap on the floor, bedding rolled up next the wall. This serves as a lounging place. A modern cupboard and table are the only modern pieces you recognize. The singers, with their drums and flutes, are arranged about six feet in front of the recording machines. The leader and timer of the songs sits in front, rehearses the singers, humming low, before each record is made. The war chief, with his interpreter, is there, inviting himself to find out what it is all about, to sanction or prohibit the recording of songs he wants or does not want sung. After recording a song we produce it for the singers, also to know if it is properly recorded. Near the operator is an educated Indian boy, who acts as an interpreter, who tells

the operator the different songs used in this particular tribe, also to keep him posted as to how they are pleased, and what they are objecting to. The Red Willow singers had an idea that the records were poisoned and bad medicine. After convincing them that they were not, and that we were preserving their voices and songs so their children could hear them when they were gone, it was different, and they are now "good medicine." The records making ends with a feast and playing over all of the songs recorded. The principal singers of this tribe are: Deer-Yellow Willows, Standing Buffalo, Beaver, War Bonnet, Hang-a Deer, Sun Deer, Buckskin Star, Mountain Arrow, Black Bird.

NAVAJO INDIANS PAY TRIBUTE TO THE SUN

On the day appointed, at sunrise, cedar boughs were cut and hauled in from the mountains to construct a corral about 200 feet in diameter. In the center the fire tenders



A CROW CHIEF.

piled high the wood, and the fires were started. Preliminary worship and ceremonies had been in progress for several days prior to the dance. A sacred painting had been prepared, in which the sun, moon, stars, and various animals were drawn. Prayer sticks were placed at the ends, and a patient was laid on the painting while the medicine man went through his manipulations of the art of healing. A medicine had been prepared, and when it proved to be good all Navajos present dipped their hands in it and applied it to their bodies. This ceremony is sacred to the Indians, and they believe in the power of the medicine man. Whether the medicine man believes in it we cannot say. "Medicine" does not mean drugs or lotions to an Indian. It means ceremonies, prayer, applications or anything to invoke the Great Spirits. Whatever works the opposite is "bad medicine." The dancers entered and encircled the

fire, holding their prayer sticks close to the blaze. Soon two principal dancers came in. Holding their prayer sticks in their mouths, they threw their heads back and pointed the prayer sticks to the heavens, offering prayers. Other dancers, representing male and female spirits, encircled the fire. A basket containing medicine was placed with crossed feathers on top and they danced around it. Soon there entered almost nude dancers, their bodies painted with white and brown earth, each carrying long braided whips of cedar bark. They lit the ends of these whips, then ran to the north, south, east, and west, with the burning brands, whipping themselves and other Navajos. This was followed by a rush of Indians to gather pieces of the demolished fire whips. The dance continued all the night. The Navajos worship the sun with fire to invoke its blessings. Thousands of dollars worth of blankets, jewelry, and precious stones were on display for the visitors, and products of agriculture were also exhibited. The

Navajo reservation is as large as the state of Pennsylvania. The Indians own great herds of ponies and sheep. They weave the Navajo blankets, using native wool and their own dyes. In every blanket they weave some figures that represent an event in their lives or some symbol of ceremony. No two blankets are alike. If, when weaving, they have trouble with certain lines or figures, they will run the line in one color to the edge of the blanket to let the devil out.

CHARACTERISTICS AND GAMES OF THE CROW INDIANS

MOURNERS

When an Indian dies, he is prepared for burial before he has taken his last breath, his weapons and provisions are placed with him, as he will need them on the journey to the "Land of Ghosts." If he possesses much wealth, there will be many who come to mourn, and they will be given something for the act of mourning, relatives or not. The squaws will not dance when in mourning, and you can mark them by the black handkerchief worn on the head and dark dress.

PRIDE

An Indian is proud that he is an Indian, and does not want to be anything else, even when educated to the highest degree. The visitors admire his finery, and dress, and manners and this pleases the Indian. In the dance lodges the men are so vain that they carry small mirrors, and are continually primping. The mirror and cigarette go hand in hand. They wear the ordinary trousers of the white men, but they are made out of bright red, with beaded stripes down the outer seams, and beaded mocassins of buckskin or calf. Their shirts are beaded with flower designs usually. They wear necklaces made of bone, supposed to be a kind of shield. They carry pipe and tobacco bags which are artistically beaded. The hair is hung in two braids, coming around in front, with a high pompadour.

GAMES

Throwing the arrow is played at any time of the year. The arrow is about three feet long. An Indian will throw an arrow about 80 yards, and then they will bet and all throw toward the same arrow. Their throwing is marvelously accurate.

The hand game is a gambling game: ten sticks laid on the ground, five on a side. One takes an elk tooth, and holds his two hands together, passes the tooth from one to the other, and the first one on the opposite side guesses which hand the tooth is in. If he guesses right the party retires. The game is a scientific juggling of the elk tooth. The game of shinny is played in the summer. Horse racing is the greatest sport and gamble. An Indian will pay \$600 for a horse to win a \$10 bet and race. Foot racing is another sport, and no people in the world are as fleet as the Indians. There are many on this reservation who can run 100 yards in ten seconds.

NATIVE ABILITY

The Indian possesses ability in the extreme. As a trader he is never beaten out of anything, unless he is



RELAY RACE.

hungry and his family starving. He lives in his own primitive way, with his own surgery, with his grandmother for nurse, and historian and matchmaker. When an Indian school girl wants to finish at Carlisle or some other school, she must have the agent's permission, her parents' and grandmother's. The grandmother usually stops the proceedings, and in a short time the girl is wearing a blanket, with a papoose strapped upon her back. The Indian woman is the power that moves the tribe; she is the machine. The warrior is the person to be admired.

On July 25, 1876, there were camped about 2000 lodges of Indians that took part in the Battle of the Little Horn. Each lodge averaged five persons. About morning, Major Reno attacked them and was made to retreat. Custer marched over the bridge towards the East, threw out his skirmish line and opened fire. By three o'clock the battle was over, Custer and his followers all slain, his Indian scouts in flight. During this time the squaws had packed the camp and moved into the hills, and the Indian dead was buried as soon as the battle was over. On the morning of the next day they were making for their several reservations, Sitting Bull going into Canada, not to return until after his peace treaty a few years later. At the time of the Battle of the Little Horn, the Indians were equipped with better rifles than the United States soldiers. Chief Gaul rode with his warriors right through the middle of Custers' command, then rode in circles about the two bodies of soldiers, firing all the time. This kept General Custer from sending for reinforcements, and for his ammunition packs. Hence the cause of defeat. The Indian is an adept in his own realm, knowing and worshipping nature alone. She gave him birth and life, and she will take him when he dies. He does not fear death.

The reservation is policed with Indians appointed by the agent. The chief of police is an old Indian, by the name of Big Medicine. He is the best politician in the tribe. The Indians are very cleanly in person, but they do not seem to care how soiled their clothes are. An Indian would rather buy a new dress than wash an old one.